DEPARTMENT OF THE ARMY
PACIFIC OCEAN DIVISION, CORPS OF ENGINEERS
FORT SHAFTER, HAWAII 96858-5440

REPLY TO
ATTENTION OF

CEPOD-PDC

6 December 2007

MEMORANDUM FOR COMMANDER, ALASKA ENGINEER DISTRICT, ATTN: CEPOA-EN-CW-PF

SUBJECT: Peer Review Plan Approval for the Navigation Improvements Homer, Alaska, Study

1. The enclosed Review Plan for the Navigation Improvements Homer, Alaska, Study has been prepared in accordance with EC 1105-2-408 and the Director of Civil Works' "Peer Review Process" memorandum dated March 30, 2007.

2. The Review Plan is available for public comment, and the comments received will be incorporated into the Review Plan as appropriate. The Review Plan has been coordinated with the Navigation Planning Center of Expertise of the South Atlantic Division, U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, which is the lead office to execute this Review Plan. The Review Plan does not include external peer review because the scope and technical complexity of the feasibility report are not expected to be novel, controversial, or precedent setting.

3. I hereby approve this Review Plan, which is subject to change as study circumstances require, consistent with study development under the Project Management Business Process. Subsequent revisions to this Review Plan or its execution will require new written approval from this office.

4. The point of contact for this Review Plan can be reached at (907) 753-5638.

FOR THE COMMANDER:

Encl

EUGENE M. BAN, P.E.
Director of Programs

FEASIBILITY STUDY PEER REVIEW PLAN
NAVIGATION IMPROVEMENTS
HOMER, ALASKA
PWI: 014432

The information contained in this quality control and peer review plan is distributed solely for the purpose of predissemination peer review under applicable information quality guidelines. It has not been formally disseminated by the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, Alaska District. It does not represent and should not be construed to represent any agency determination or policy.

1. General. This review plan was developed in accordance with EC 1105-2-408, "Peer Review of Decision Documents," dated 31 May 2005. The EC establishes procedures to ensure the quality and credibility of Corps decision documents. It applies to all feasibility and any other reports that lead to decision documents that require authorization by Congress.

2. Study Description.

a. Homer (2006 population of 5,454) is located on the southwestern edge of the Kenai Peninsula in southcentral Alaska. Commercial, recreational, and subsistence fishing, fish processing, and seasonal tourist industry are the mainstays of the Homer economy.

b. The existing Homer Harbor is utilized beyond its capacity. The harbor is unable to accommodate the needs of larger commercial fishing vessels. Overcrowding of larger vessels has resulted in increased repairs and maintenance to vessels and docks, and inefficient vessel operations. Overcrowding is also a problem for smaller commercial fishing, charter, and recreational vessels. Many large vessels are home-ported in the Pacific Northwest (PNW) due to the limited space available in Homer. Vessel operators have indicated they would relocate their permanent moorage to Homer if moorage space was available. Relocation of these vessels would result in cost savings through the avoidance of numerous trips back and forth to the PNW. There is an opportunity to reduce operating costs, damages, and crew times of these vessels by providing additional protected moorage at Homer.

c. The Homer Navigation Improvements Feasibility Study began 21 March 2007 with the execution of a Feasibility Cost Sharing Agreement between the City of Homer and the Army Corps of Engineers, Alaska District. Through a separate agreement, the City of Homer is partnering with the Alaska Department of Transportation and Public Facilities. The feasibility study is currently estimated to cost $1,500,000. The City will provide 50% of all study costs through non-Federal cash and in-kind contributions. The Corps will fund the remaining 50% of study costs. The study was recommended in the November 2004 reconnaissance report and is authorized by the "Rivers and Harbors in Alaska" study resolution adopted by the U.S. House of Representatives Committee on Public Works on December 2, 1970.

d. The feasibility study will evaluate a variety of measures to increase the efficiency of commercial, recreational, and subsistence vessel operations in Homer region. Non-structural and structural measures will be evaluated. Non-structural measures will include relocation and upland storage of vessels. Structural measures will include variations of rubblemound breakwaters to provide additional protected moorage at Homer. Dredging to construct an entrance channel, maneuvering basin, and mooring basin would be required.

e. Study Complexity. The Homer region is a major nesting and migratory stop-over for many species of birds and waterfowl. The study area is located within the Kachemak Bay state critical habitat area. The preferred site for harbor construction is not a prime area for nesting or migratory purposes. However, due to the site being in the same region it is anticipated that study will generate significant interests from the public.

Numerous studies have been conducted as part of the existing Corps harbor (constructed in 1985) in Homer and as part of ongoing research by the Kachemak Bay Research Reserve Center and other agencies. Based on these studies and information gathered during the initial agency scoping of this study, the project delivery team believes that public concerns and comments can be successfully resolved during the course of the study.

The existing marine infrastructure in Homer is located on the Homer Spit, which is within the critical habitat area. The preferred site for harbor construction is located adjacent to the existing boat harbor, within the critical habitat area. This site was chosen because of its close proximity to existing marine infrastructure and to deeper waters of the Bay. Additionally, the site minimizes project impacts to critical migratory bird and intertidal habitats in the region.

The Alaska District has participated in numerous harbor studies and successfully designed and constructed small boat harbors throughout the state of Alaska. The Homer study will follow many of the methodologies used in those projects.

3. Project Delivery Team (PDT). The Alaska District and the City of Homer, in partnership with the Alaska Department of Transportation and Public Facilities, are jointly conducting this study. The Corps' project formulator is the primary point of contact for the PDT and can be contacted at 907-753-5638. Questions and comments on this Peer Review Plan should be directed to the project formulator. The project development team (PDT) for this study consists of the following disciplines. Other disciplines will be included as needed.

Project Delivery Team

Project Manager	Alaska District
Project Manager	City of Homer
Project Formulator	Alaska District
Hydraulic Engineer	Alaska District
Hydraulic Engineer	ADOT&PF
Economist	Alaska District
Biologist	Alaska District
Biologist	USFWS
Archaeologist	Alaska District
Cost Engineer	Alaska District
Geotechnical Engineer	Alaska District
Real Estate Specialist	Alaska District

4. Model Certification. Economic analyses and benefit determinations will be performed via Excel spreadsheets. These spreadsheets will be developed during the course of the study. The Deep Draft PCX will be consulted as these spreadsheets are being developed for a determination on the need for model certification.

5. Review and Quality Control.

a. Independent Technical Review (ITR) is the primary method of quality control. The ITR team will review all products developed during the study to ensure planning, analysis, and design conform to applicable US Army Corps of Engineers (USACE) standards, policy, and guidance. ITR will occur throughout the study, rather than a cumulative review performed at the end. ITR comments and responses will be documented using DRChecks and will be resolved prior to forwarding the documents to the Pacific Ocean Division (POD) and Headquarters (HQ). ITR documentation and certification will be included with the submissions. All ITR comments will be resolved prior to forwarding the feasibility study to higher authority.

The ITR team will review the Feasibility Scoping Meeting, Alternative Formulation Briefing, and draft Feasibility Report and Environmental Impact Statement (FR/EIS) documents before submittal to POD and HQ. The team will review the final FR/EIS before it is submitted for approval only if there are significant changes in the report as a result of public reviews. The ITR will be performed by Corps, State, and contractor personnel. The ITR team will consist of people with experience in the major disciplines that are not involved in the day-to-day development of the study, and will include representatives of the local sponsor. Since the Alaska District is the Planning Center of Expertise (PCX) for small boat harbors, the ITR team leader will be from the Alaska District. The ITR team leader will be responsible for selecting ITR personnel. The following disciplines are anticipated for the ITR team:

ITR Team

Project Formulator – ITR Lead	Alaska District
Hydraulic Engineer	A/E Contractor
Hydraulic Engineer	ADOT&PF
Economist	A/E Contractor
Biologist	Alaska District
Cost Engineer	Cost Engineering PCX/Walla Walla District
Geotechnical Engineer	Alaska District
Real Estate Specialist	Alaska District

b. Public Review. Periodic public meetings will be held in Homer to provide study updates and identify study issues. The public will be notified of scheduled meeting and draft documents for available for review in accordance with NEPA procedures. Anticipated public meetings will occur during the initial study scoping, prior to the Alternative Formulation Briefing, and prior to formal public review. Additional public meetings will be held if determined to be necessary during the course of the study. The ITR team will generally not receive public comments as these comments will be used to develop the documents the ITR team reviews.

c. Value Engineering Study. The VE study will focus on the consideration of additional alternatives that would more effectively meet the planning objectives rather than the evaluation of design details related to each alternative. The VE study team will be independent of the PDT and consist of individuals knowledgeable of harbor studies and designs.

d. Quality control will also be monitored via internal/District functional element reviews, local sponsor reviews, and higher authority/vertical team conferences and reviews. The local sponsor will be the lead for quality control over deliverables provided as in-kind contributions. The Corps will verify that such contributions meet study quality standards before granting cost-sharing credit for those contributions.

e. External Peer Review. It is recommended that External Peer Review not be conducted for this feasibility study. The Alaska District has participated in numerous harbor studies and successfully designed and constructed small boat harbors throughout the state of Alaska. The Homer study will follow many of the methodologies used in those projects. The scope and technical complexity for this study is not expected to be novel, controversial, or precedent setting. The study is not anticipated to generate influential scientific information that would be either controversial or of sufficient risk and magnitude as to require EPR. Implementation cost is currently estimated to be $20 to $30 million.

6. Schedule. The schedule for milestones subject to ITR:

ITR Milestones

Feasibility Scoping Meeting	March 2008
Alternative Formulation Briefing	September 2008
Draft Feasibility Report and EIS	September 2009